

Emergency system appears to work

By Thomas Nelson
Staff reporter

Disasters are and always will be part of life. Whether they be natural such as Hurricane Katrina or man-made such as the Virginia Tech shootings, it is a good idea to have a plan in place in the event that a horrific incident should occur. With that in mind, the school has recently implemented a new emergency alert system called Connect-ED.

According to Connect-ED's frequently asked questions, the service "combines the power of the Internet with the perva-

siveness of the telephone to give users an affordable and easy-to-use tool to reach out to their communities. Users record a voice message in their own voice using just a telephone or type a message to be sent to text receiving devices."

In the event of an emergency, the system can send voice messages to student's houses, work, and cell phones. Text messages can be sent to cell phones, PDAs and other text-based devices. Written messages can be sent to e-mail accounts. Messages also can be sent to TTY/TDD receiving devices for the hearing impaired.

For those of you who, like

me, don't know, TTY stands for telephone typewriter or teletypewriter. TDD stands for telecommunications device for the deaf. They are a series of devices that make it easier for the deaf to communicate over the telephone.

Connect-ED uses what is called multi-modal communication. By employing all the methods mentioned above, it is more likely to reach individuals and tell them that there is an emergency.

Connect-ED says, "During a time-sensitive situation, multi-modal communication is critical as it is a more comprehensive way to reach people in

the environment they may be in at the moment an issue arises. Communication is sent simultaneously to all available contact points for each person."

The system has been tested, and after only minor setbacks, it looks like it is working fine.

Sara Weinert, vice president for communications, said, "We uncovered a couple of issues we wouldn't have known about if we hadn't tested."

One such issue was that the college's "all" e-mail address had been incorrectly entered by the service providers. This prevented e-mails from being sent with the first test. However, they quickly resolved the issue

and tested again.

Weinert said, "With each re-test we had better coverage, and we feel confident now that the system works well and reliably."

Fox Talbott, computer science sophomore, said, "I think it's a great idea. It can be used for several kinds of emergencies." He was, however, concerned with the amount of time it took to make the calls. He said, "When they tested it, Grant [Stackhouse] and I got our phone calls 20 minutes apart."

Keith Peck, physics junior, said, "It's highly annoying and highly effective. It works. That's all I have to say about it."

The contact information that is used was collected at the beginning of the year when students registered.

While students can opt out of the service, it is highly recommended that they don't. Connect-ED will never share a person's contact information with anyone. It does not "sell, lease, share, or rent personally identifiable information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) to any companies or persons outside of [the companies] service providers."

Thomas Nelson is a senior majoring in history and theatre. You may e-mail him at thomas.nelson@sckans.edu.

Change in menu requires comment cards

By Peggy Williams
Staff reporter

Every day most students on campus spend somewhere around an hour eating food from the cafeteria or the Java Jinx. At every meal, you hear someone complain about the quality of the food to another student. They complain to other students because no one has any idea who else to speak with in order to change the food. That's where the online Campus Din-

ing Services survey is supposed to make a difference.

The administration has contracted the world's largest food services company called Sodexo to prepare the food. In charge of it all is a General Manager named Harold Harris. He wants to make your dining experience the best that it can be. In order to do so Harris said, "I need the surveys to be answered, and I would love for students to be honest, and just come talk to me."

When the food surveys are sent out, they go to each student's school e-mail inbox. When you open it you see a message that politely asks if you would spare about 10 minutes of your time to fill out a survey regarding the quality of food services. But how many students actually take the survey?

Harris says that Sodexo requires a certain percentage of students to take the survey and that our students usually meet the quota. Meeting the quota is

great, but it may not seem as if too many changes result from your 10 minute quest to express your opinions.

That is because the survey company just sends Harris an overview of all the surveys. He views your answers in percentages and does his best to make changes.

"Students have been requesting breakfast, when we put it out 90 percent of students eat it," said Harris. That is the reason why food services have

been serving breakfast at dinner so often.

While the online survey is easier, Harris cannot see exactly what you write. If there is something that you would like to have changed it would have a larger impact if you asked for a comment card at the register and politely suggest that they change the aspects of dining services that you do not appreciate.

Harris also said, "I would like for them to write their names

on the comment cards, then I can explain to them why we do things the way we do."

Harris is more than willing to listen to any comments or ideas that students have. You can even go speak with him in person about anything you have an issue with. You just have to make the effort to express your opinion.

Peggy Williams is a sophomore majoring in English. You may e-mail her at peggy.williams@sckans.edu.

Team travels to Emporia for programming contest

By Michelle Dreiling
Staff reporter

A team of three computer science majors will be traveling to Emporia State University Nov. 3 to compete in the Association for Computing Machinery Programming Contest. Hundreds of contestants in the North Central North America region will compete to become one of 90 teams to make it to the World Finals, April 6-8 in Banff Springs, Alberta, Canada.

This is Southwestern's second year to participate. Representing the college will be Sharon Krusemark, computer science junior, Tony Lara, computer science and new media junior,

and Cory Talbott, sophomore.

The contest itself begins at 12:30 p.m. Saturday. Teams will be given six to nine computer programming problems, five hours to complete them, and one computer to use. Results of the contest will be made available following competition.

The team coach will be Crystal Peng, assistant professor of computer science. Peng said that the team is selected from

people in programming classes who are interested.

The team prepares for contest by meeting weekly. They review programming, algorithm, and mathematic topics, and solve problems from previous years' contests.

The purpose of competing is to learn "problem solving, programming, and teamwork skills, along with what other schools and college students are doing,"

said Peng.

Lara said that he was curious about the contest because he had never competed in anything like this.

As for how SC will compete against other teams, Lara said, "We try as much to concentrate on the problems instead of what other people would do. That is the kind of competition we bring."

Krusemark said that she ex-

pects the team to rank in the top half of all contestants. "I expect to learn more problem solving skills. Each problem requires accounting for each possibility of input and thinking through the process of solving the prob-

lem to provide correct logic in the program."

Michelle Dreiling is a junior majoring in computer science and communication. You may e-mail her at michelle.dreiling@sckans.edu.

Mallet artist to perform next week

By Paige Carswell
Staff reporter

The jazz series has been moved from Nov. 2 to Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m. in Messenger Hall.

The Southwestern College Jazz Band will open, and the guest will be jazz mallet artist Jerry Tachoir. He is the leader of the contemporary jazz ensemble "Tachoir". The ensemble has performed throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe and has had two grammy-nominated records.

Tachoir hails from Hendersonville, Tenn., and is the author of the book *A Contemporary Mallet Method: An Approach to the Vibraphone and Marimba*. He is one of the most demanded mallet artists in the world today.

Paige Carswell is a freshman majoring in communication. You may e-mail her at paige.carswell@sckans.edu.

Tornado watch causes scare

By Nick Wagner
Staff reporter

A tornado watch for neighboring counties around Cowley County was issued last week. The threat of a tornado hitting Winfield is possible. People need to be aware of what to do in case of such a disaster.

Sarah Hallinan, director of residence life, said, "We tell the RA's of each of the dorm halls to help spread awareness of what were to happen if such a thing were to happen. We've created a tornado safety and evacuation plan in case an emergency were to happen, so people on campus will know what to do."

The tornado safety and evacuation plan has information about each building on campus in case of a tornado. Wallingford residents should move to the first floor hallways with the fire doors shut.

Cole residents should move to

the basement level or first floor hallways.

The safety plan contains the basic information to be taken immediately such as going to a basement and away from windows, with more in depth information for each facility. The safety plan also states that people should stay in shelter until advised that its safe to come out.

Dave Helsel, director of safety and security, said, "As a personal preference I'd say that White P.E.'s basement locker rooms would be the safest place of all the facilities on campus. Stewart Field House is the least safe place to be in a tornado, too much open space without support beams."

Helsel also said that the basements of Mossman and the library are well structured.

On May 4, 2007, Greensburg was struck by the most violent tornado to hit U.S. soil in eight

years. The tornado destroyed 95 percent of the town, killing 10 people. The town was completely leveled, leaving 300 students without a school.

Ashley Robinson, nursing junior, said, "Being from Kansas I know of tornadoes but I don't ever really expect to be affected by one. The Greensburg disaster was a major eye opener for me."

Helsel said, "If there is a tornado watch issued, we make sure to unlock all the doors to each building making sure they are accessible to whoever needs in."

To learn more about safety and security on campus for all situations, there is more information at www.sckans.edu/student_life/index.php?page_ID=1510.

Nick Wagner is a sophomore with an undecided major. You may e-mail him at nick.wagner@sckans.edu.

Commission hosts Family Fun Night

By Carissa Kelley
Staff reporter

Have you ever been sitting on the couch on a Friday with nothing to do? Well not anymore. On Nov. 9, the Winfield Recreation Center is hosting the first annual Rubbermaid/Coca-Cola Family Fun Night. It will be held in Thornton Recreation Center from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Candi Fox, administrative assistant, said, "Other communities have done this before and we decided it would be fun to do it in our community. The main

event is an inflatable obstacle course. There will also be an inflatable castle, three lane bungee run, and popcorn and drinks. This event is very affordable for the whole family, only 25 cents a ticket."

Scott Schoon, director of activities, said, "The event is open to any family with all ages of kids but that the event targets the ages of 12 and under. This is a big event and a lot of fun."

Carissa Kelley is a junior majoring in communication. You may e-mail her at carissa.kelley@sckans.edu.

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